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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ROME 002193

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: ITALY'S EU PRESIDENCY: TRANSPORT MINISTRY  
PRIORITIES

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1. (SBU) SUMMARY. ELIMINATING NATIONAL BARRIERS AND CUTTING THROUGH BUREAUCRATIC RED TAPE TO ALLOW THE FREE MOVEMENT OF GOODS AND PEOPLE WITHIN THE EU IS A TOP PRIORITY FOR ITALY'S TRANSPORTATION MINISTRY DURING THE UPCOMING EU PRESIDENCY. THE TRANSPORTATION MINISTER'S DIPLOMATIC ADVISOR TOLD US IN A RECENT MEETING THAT OTHER PRIORITIES INCLUDE IMPROVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE TRANSPORTATION SECTOR, REDESIGNING THE TOLL SYSTEM AND ENSURING THE SAFE TRANSPORT OF GOODS AND PEOPLE.

2. (U) IN PREPARATION FOR THE ITALIAN EU PRESIDENCY, EACH MINISTRY HAS DRAWN UP ITS TOP PRIORITIES. ALTHOUGH THE PRIME MINISTER HAS YET TO GIVE HIS IMPRIMATUR TO THE OFFICIAL PROGRAM, MOST, IF NOT ALL, OF THE TRANSPORTATION MINISTRY'S PRIORITIES ARE EXPECTED TO BE APPROVED. END SUMMARY.

3. (SBU) DURING A RECENT MEETING WITH DIPLOMATIC ADVISOR EMILIO MARAINI, WE WERE PRESENTED WITH THE MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION'S SIX PROPOSED PRIORITIES FOR ITALY'S EU PRESIDENCY.

FREE MOVEMENT OF GOODS AND PEOPLE WITHIN THE EU  
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4. (SBU) MARAINI BEGAN BY DESCRIBING THE ITALIAN EU PRESIDENCY'S PLANS TO STRENGTHEN THE INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRANS-EUROPEAN TRANSPORT NETWORK (TEN-T)  
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IN TERMS OF QUALITY, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFETY AND BALANCE AMONG THE DIFFERENT MODES OF TRANSPORT TO ENSURE THE FREE MOVEMENT OF GOODS AND PEOPLE. ACCORDING TO MARAINI, INSUFFICIENT INFRASTRUCTURE AND BUREAUCRATIC DELAYS LIMIT THE FREE MOVEMENT OF GOODS, A CORE PRINCIPLE OF THE TREATY OF ROME. HE POINTED TO THE GRIDLOCK OF TRANSPORTATION THROUGH THE ALPS AS A TOP CONCERN FOR ITALY. HE ALSO CRITICIZED AUSTRIA'S USE OF "ECO-POINTS," USED TO CONTROL FREIGHT TRAFFIC EMISSIONS. IN MARAINI'S VIEW, "ECO-POINTS" LIMIT THE FREE TRANSIT OF GOODS AND ARE NOT THE BEST OPTION EVEN FROM AN ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE. THE GOI WOULD PREFER AN EU WIDE SYSTEM OF LIMITATIONS OR A TOTAL BAN ON TRUCKS WITH THE MOST HIGHLY POLLUTING EMISSIONS.

5. (SBU) ENLARGEMENT, MARAINI ARGUED, WOULD ALSO SHIFT THE EU'S "CENTER OF GRAVITY." THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION IS WORKING WITH A TASK FORCE TO REDESIGN THE TRANS-EUROPEAN NETWORK. THE GOI IS WORRIED, HE ADMITTED, THAT THERE MAY BE A TENDENCY TO FAVOR NEW EAST-WEST CONNECTIONS OVER NORTH-SOUTH CONNECTIONS.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSPORT  
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6. (SBU) MARAINI ASSERTED THAT THE GOI SUPPORTS AN INCREASED USE OF ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION, SUCH AS RAILWAYS AND SHIPS. DURING ITALY'S EU PRESIDENCY, SPECIAL ATTENTION WILL BE GIVEN TO THE DEVELOPMENTS OF THE MARCO POLO PROJECT, SEA MOTORWAYS AND THE SECOND RAILWAY PACKAGE. NOTE: THE MARCO POLO PROJECT IS A COMMISSION INITIATIVE TO FUND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE OF THE FREIGHT  
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TRANSPORT SYSTEM. ITS GOAL IS TO REDUCE ROAD CONGESTION AND SHIFT FREIGHT TRANSPORT FROM ROAD TO SHORT SEA SHIPPING, RAIL AND INLAND WATERWAY TRANSPORT. END NOTE.

REDESIGNING THE ROAD TOLL SYSTEMS  
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7. (SBU) UPGRADING THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM, POINTED OUT MARAINI, WILL REQUIRE INCREASED FUNDING. TO SUPPORT FINANCING DECISIONS, MARAINI STATED THAT REVISING THE "EURO-VIGNETTE" DIRECTIVE (ON ROAD TARIFF INFRASTRUCTURE - I.E. THE TOLL SYSTEM) TO INCLUDE EXTERNAL COSTS (E.G.

POLLUTION, ACCIDENTS, ETC.) IS A HIGH PRIORITY FOR THE GOI. ITALY LOOKS FORWARD TO REACHING, AT A MINIMUM, A POLITICAL AGREEMENT WITHIN THE COUNCIL DURING ITALY'S PRESIDENCY. HOWEVER, MARAINI ADMITTED THAT SPAIN'S RELUCTANCE TO CHANGE THIS DIRECTIVE COULD HINDER A POLITICAL AGREEMENT.

18. (SBU) AS EACH MEMBER STATE HAS A UNIQUE TOLL SYSTEM, THE ITALIANS, DURING THEIR PRESIDENCY, WOULD LIKE TO COME TO AN AGREEMENT ON THE INTEROPERABILITY OF TOLL SYSTEMS. MARAINI DIVULGED THAT AN INTEROPERATIVE TELEPASS SYSTEM BASED ON GALILEO IS A FUTURE GOAL.

LIBERALIZING TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

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ACTION EUR-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	A-00	ACQ-00	CEA-01	CG-00
	CIAE-00	COME-00	CTME-00	INL-00	DODE-00	ITCE-00	DOTE-00
	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	EXME-00	E-00	FAAE-00	UTED-00
	FMC-01	VC-00	FRB-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	ITC-01
	VCE-00	M-00	AC-01	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OES-00	OMB-01
	DHS-00	OPIC-01	ACE-00	SP-00	SSO-00	SS-00	STR-00
	TEST-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	EPAE-00	DSCC-00	G-00	SAS-00
	/006W						

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R 161401Z MAY 03  
FM AMEMBASSY ROME  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9976  
INFO EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE  
AMCONSUL FLORENCE  
AMCONSUL MILAN  
AMCONSUL NAPLES  
USEU BRUSSELS 3235  
DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION WASHDC

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19. (SBU) MARAINI STRESSED THAT LIBERALIZING EUROPE'S TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS (RAILWAYS, AIR AND HARBOR SERVICES) AND PROMOTING FREE ACCESS TO THE TRANSPORTATION MARKET BY NEW MARKET PARTICIPANTS ARE SOME OF THE KEY GOALS OF THE EU'S TRANSPORT POLICY, OBJECTIVES THAT THE GOI SUPPORTS. WHILE RECOGNIZING THE DIFFICULTIES INHERENT IN LIBERALIZING RAILWAY SYSTEMS (E.G. EACH COUNTRY HAS ITS OWN SYSTEM AND MOST TRADE UNIONS OPPOSE RAILWAY PRIVATIZATION), HE EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT LIBERALIZING AIR TRANSPORT SHOULD NOT BE AS DIFFICULT SINCE STATE-OWNED CARRIERS ARE DECREASING IN NUMBER.

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

10. (U) TRANSPORTATION SAFETY IS A HIGH GOI PRIORITY, EMPHASIZED MARAINI. THE GOI IS ESPECIALLY CONCERNED ABOUT ACCIDENTS ON ROADS AND HIGHWAYS. ITALY AVERAGES 8,000 - 9,000 ROAD FATALITIES A YEAR, WHILE IN OTHER COUNTRIES, SUCH AS FRANCE AND SPAIN, THOSE NUMBERS ARE EVEN HIGHER. THUS THE ITALIAN PRESIDENCY WILL SUPPORT PROPOSALS INITIATED DURING THE GREEK PRESIDENCY THAT INCLUDE TUNNEL SAFETY AND ROAD TRANSPORT CONTROLS AND SANCTIONS.

11. (U) SINCE THE SINKING OF THE OIL-TANKER PRESTIGE, MARITIME SAFETY HAS BECOME A GREATER CONCERN TO THE GOI. DURING ITS PRESIDENCY, THE GOI WILL SPEED UP NAVIGATION SAFETY MEASURES THAT FOCUS ON THE SEA TRANSPORT OF DANGEROUS AND POLLUTING GOODS AND MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION.

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MARAINI AFFIRMED THAT THE GOI IS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN PHASING OUT SINGLE-HULL OIL TANKERS MORE QUICKLY AND TO IDENTIFY PORTS OF REFUGE IN EACH MEMBER STATE.

12. (U) IN RESPONSE TO THE PROLIFERATION OF DIFFERENT SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR RAILROAD SYSTEMS ACROSS MEMBER STATES, THE GOI WOULD LIKE TO ESTABLISH COMMON SAFETY STANDARDS. GOVERNMENTS WOULD STILL RETAIN THE OPTION OF ADOPTING HIGHER STANDARDS, AS LONG AS THEY WERE IMPOSED IN A

NON-DISCRIMINATORY MANNER.

113. (U) THE GOI WOULD ALSO LIKE TO SEE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DURING THE SECOND READING OF THE SINGLE EUROPEAN SKY "DOSSIER" DURING ITS PRESIDENCY. PRIORITY WILL BE GIVEN TO THE MEASURES REGARDING SAFETY OF PASSENGERS AND PROTECTION OF THEIR RIGHTS, SUCH AS REIMBURSEMENT FOR DENIED BOARDING AND ON CANCELED AND DELAYED FLIGHTS.

GALILEO  
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114. (SBU) GALILEO IS AN ITALIAN PRIORITY FOR ITS EU PRESIDENCY. MARAINI STATED THAT THE GOI WOULD LIKE TO SPEED UP DECISIONS CONCERNING GALILEO, INCLUDING DECISIONS ON THE DEFINITION OF SERVICES AND ITS DEPLOYMENT AND OPERATION.

MEETINGS & OTHER EVENTS  
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115. (SBU) THE COUNCILS OF TRANSPORT, TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND ENERGY ARE SCHEDULED TO MEET ON OCTOBER 9-10 AND ON DECEMBER  
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4-5. THE GOI IS PLANNING AN INFORMAL MEETING OF THE MINISTERS OF TRANSPORT IN NAPLES, JULY 4-5, 2003, TO WHICH WILL BE INVITED THE TEN CANDIDATE COUNTRIES. ADDITIONALLY, THE GOI WOULD LIKE TO LAUNCH A COMMON DEBATE ON THE TEN-T.

ITALY-U.S. COOPERATION  
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116. (SBU) MARAINI REASSURED US THAT THE GOI SUPPORTS THE CONTAINER SECURITY INITIATIVE (CSI) AND WOULD WORK WITH THE U.S. ON THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF CONTAINERS. HE ALSO STATED THAT THE GOI IS AWARE OF THE DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED IN THE TRANSITION TO A TRANSATLANTIC OPEN SKIES AGREEMENT AND SAID, "I HOPE THAT IT WILL BE TREATED WITH COMMON SENSE."

COMMENT:  
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117. (SBU) MARAINI WAS A FORTHRIGHT AND INTELLIGENT INTERLOCUTOR. WE EXPECT TO CALL UPON HIM FREQUENTLY TO DISCUSS SOME OF THE MORE CONTENTIOUS TRANSPORTATION ISSUES WE HAVE WITH THE EU.  
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